

ADHD, Autism, & AuDHD

How they present on their own & navigating both

What is neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity is the concept that brain differences—like those seen in autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and other conditions—are a natural and valuable part of human diversity, not deficits or disorders to be "fixed."

It was first coined by sociologist **Judy Singer** in the late 1990s, and it has since been embraced by both the scientific community and neurodivergent self-advocates.

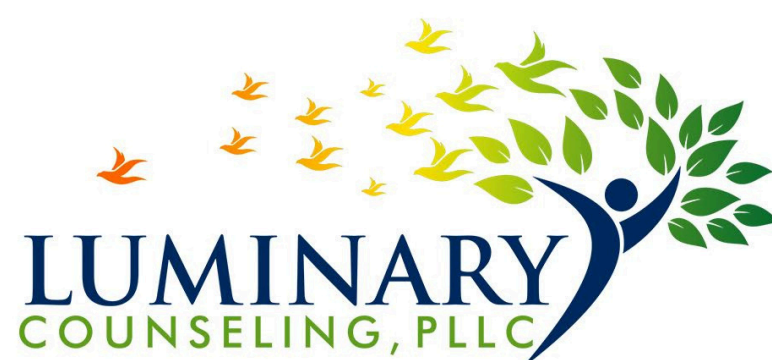
Rather than viewing conditions like Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) solely through a medical model (which emphasizes impairments), neurodiversity promotes a **social model of disability**, which recognizes that societal structures—not just individual traits—create challenges for neurodivergent people.

Read **below** to learn about some of the unique symptoms and experiences of people with ADHD, ASD, and AuDHD.

Note: This page is **not a diagnostic tool, but a resource of information for reference and guidance in seeking further support.**



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ADHD, ASD, and AuDHD: *What's unique about them?*

ADHD
attention deficit / hyperactivity disorder

Symptoms: Inattention, hyperactivity, impulsivity

Executive Functioning Deficits: Difficulty organizing tasks, managing time, and setting priorities

Emotional Dysregulation: Difficulty managing frustration, leading to emotional outbursts, irritability, or mood swings.

Social Difficulties: Trouble following social rules, interrupting conversations, or misreading social cues.

Science/Empirical Findings: ADHD is associated with deficits in prefrontal cortex function, impacting attention regulation and impulse control (Barkley, 2015)

ASD
autism spectrum disorder

Symptoms: Social & communication challenges, sensory sensitivities, repetitive behaviors like routines, stimming, or fixations on specific topics or objects

Difficulty with Change: High anxiety and resistance to change or new experiences

Special Interests: Intense focus on a single interest or activity, often leading to expertise in niche areas

Need for Routine: Preference for predictable environments, distress when routines are disrupted

Science/Empirical Findings: ASD is associated with differences in brain structure, such as altered connectivity in regions related to social and emotional processing (Zielinski et al., 2014). Sensory processing differences are also a hallmark of ASD, often leading to sensory overload or seeking sensory input (Tomchek & Dunn, 2007).

AuDHD
autism + adhd combined

Blended presentations: ADHD and ASD Traits combine & present uniquely between people

More Pronounced Executive Dysfunction: Struggles with both attention regulation (ADHD) and organization/planning (ASD), leading to significant daily life challenges

Increased Sensory Sensitivity: May have more pronounced sensory issues due to the dual impact of ADHD and ASD

Social Interaction Struggles: Social difficulties may be more complex, as individuals experience both ADHD-related impulsivity (e.g., interrupting) and ASD-related difficulty in understanding social cues

Science/Empirical Findings: Research suggests that the co-occurrence of ADHD and ASD is more than just a sum of symptoms; the combination often leads to unique challenges in areas such as emotional regulation and social processing (Simonoff et al., 2008).

